



Standard Operating Procedure Refuse Disposal Division

REFUSE
DISPOSAL
DIVISION

Emergency Procedures Subsurface Fires

Warning signs may include:

- Smoke and/or heat waves emanating from cracks and/or fissures;
- Localized settlement (sinkholes up to several meters in diameter);
- The odor of burning plastic may be present

BEWARE!

*The surrounding area may not be stable. The rapid decomposition of refuse by burning may have created large voids underground.

*Fumes may be toxic!

Safety Procedures

1. If an area is suspected of having an underground fire, block further access to the area and keep people away. Make sure anyone near the suspected fire is notified and/or vacated as may be necessary. If flames are present above ground, immediately notify the Fire Department through radio dispatch or dialing 911. (Note: Pumping water into the ground may not stop the smoldering and will not prevent future fires. Smothering with dirt has always been a preferred option).
2. Try to stay upwind of any smoke and not breathe fumes, if any. Identify all LFG wells in the immediate vicinity. Notify LFG supervisor from closest available phone at (858) 573-1208 or contact Station 38.
3. Secure the site with cones, barricades, survey ribbon, etc. Be careful not to get too close if voids are suspected and ground may be unstable.
4. LFG supervisor will have wells in the area valved off or the entire LFG system shut down depending on the severity of the fire. Do not turn valves off unless instructed to do so by LFG supervisor.
5. Notify Landfill Supervisor at (858) 573-1413 (Miramar Active Landfill) and/or (858) 627-3327 (Inactive Landfill). Begin looking for sources of dirt in the immediate vicinity and/or think about how dirt can be brought to the location of the fire. LFG and/or Landfill Supervisor will notify the appropriate Regulatory Agencies and develop a plan of attack to deal with the fire (almost always smothering with dirt).

6. Schedule City forces (or contractor if severity warrants) to immediately implement the proposed plan. Contact the Division Biological staff to see if they have any biological concerns (remember, this is a Health and Safety item). Look for other cracks and/or depressions in the area and schedule their repair also. (They could be the source of air that allowed the fire to start originally).
7. Oversee repair efforts, as required, and report to LFG and/or Landfill Supervisor when fire is completely smothered and repairs are complete. Note completion of work in site log, survey location of fire for future reference and process all invoicing requests, if any, in a timely manner.

Environmental Management System (EMS) –ISO 14001

PROCESS MAP #: N/A

Benefit of Compliance to Procedure:

- Employee's safety protected
- Health and safety of public protected

Consequence of Non-Compliance to Procedure:

- Injury/Death to employee
- Injury/Death to adjacent person(s)
- Violations and/or fines from Regulatory Agencies

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